Luther's Works

The Freely Given Edition

Δωρεὰν ἐλάβετε, δωρεὰν δότε.

This work is dedicated to the public domain (CC0) for the sake of the Gospel (Matt. 10:8). All original content may be shared, translated, and adapted, in whole or in part, without limit or permission. An effort has been made to provide supplementary material that is also in the public domain, however, it may be subject to restricted use.

https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/deed.en

Abbreviations

AE	*Luther's Works: American Edition* (St. Louis and Philadelphia: Concordia Publishing House and Fortress Press, 1955-1985) Pelikan, Jaroslav and Helmut Lehmann, eds.
EA	*Dr. Martin Luther's sämmtliche Werke* (Frankfurt and Erlangen, 1826-1857). 137 vols. Commonly called the Erlangen Edition of Luther's Works.
PE	*Works of Martin Luther with Introductions and Notes*, 6 vols, A. J. Holman Company, Philadelphia, 1915-1932. Commonly called the Philadelphia Edition of Luther's Works.
PL	Patrologia Latina, 217 vols., Jacques Paul Migne, 1841-1855. A digitally transcribed and searchable version of these volumes may be found at *Corpus Corporum* hosted by Universität Zürich (mlat.uzh.ch/).
R.	For the title rabbi. E.g. "Rabbi Solomon."
WA	Weimar Edition, Schriften, 72 vols., Weimar. The full title is *D. Martin Luthers Werke: kritische Gesamtausgabe*. It is also called the *Weimarer Ausgabe* (WA).
WA Tr.	Weimar Edition, Tischreden, 6 vols.
WA DB	Weimar Edition, Die Deutsche Bibel, 12 vols.
WA Br.	Weimar Edition, Briefwechsel, 18 vols.

A Note

This is an unpublished preview of Luther's lectures on Obadiah which will be included in a future volume of *Luther's Works: The Freely Given Edition* dedicated to the Minor Prophets. There are no page numbers as these will change in the complete volume and make references to the work very confusing later on. Instead, the Weimar Edition's page numbers have been inserted into the Latin text in brackets (e.g. {p. 217}). These references will not change after the volume on the Minor Prophets is published as the Weimar Edition is finished. The main purpose of releasing this unpublished version is to grant access to Luther's lectures on Obadiah in English online, which would be significantly delayed by the work of translating and editing the other lectures. For an explanation on why this work is in the public domain, please visit the previously released volume available at books.freely.giving/, as well as Conley Owen's *The Dorean Principle* and Case, Owens, and Here's *Abolish the Jesus Trade*.

LECTURES ON OBADIAH

The Altenburg Text

Non convenit inter interpretes, quo tempore prophetarit Abdias, varie iudicant de eo, siquidem initio suae prophetiae tempus et regem, sub quo prophetarit non expressit, id quod tamen in quorundam prophetarum libris spectare licet. Hieronymus dicit hunc Abdiam fuisse qui paverit in specubus centum prophetas sub impio Achab et Isebele, ut est in 4. Regum et ideo contigisse ei donum prophetiae. Sed anicularum somniis similia sunt ea sicut et pleraque alia Hieronymi, si quando temere de rebus sacris iudicat. Aliter iudicant Iudaei in sui commentariis. Mihi autem omnino videtur prophetasse post captivitatem Babylonicam et sumpsisse suam prophetiam ex Hieremia, id quod indicant quidam loci in hoc propheta et certissimae circumstantiae convincunt fuisse eum contemporaneum Hiermiae. Instituit autem prophetiam suam contra Idumaeos qui

It is not agreed among interpreters when Obadiah prophesied. They variously judge about him, since at the start of his prophecy he does not express the time and king under whom he prophesied.[1] But one may observe that in several books of the prophets.[2]

Jerome says that this Obadiah was the one who fed the 100 prophets in the caves under the reign of the wicked Achab and Jezebel, as is in 1 Kings [18:3-4], and was therefore given the gift of prophecy.[3] But these ideas are like old women's dreams, just as are most of Jerome's other ones, whenever he sloppily judges about sacred things.

The Jews judge differently in their commentaries.[4]

[1] Giving the king and year is very common. E.g. Isa. 1:1; Jer. 1:2; Eze. 1:1-2; Hos. 1:1; Amos 1:1; Mic. 1:1; Zeph. 1:1; Hag. 1:1; Zech. 1:1.

[2] Joel 1:1; Jonah 1:1; Nah. 1:1; Hab. 1:1; Mal. 1:1.

[3] Jerome, *Commentarii in prophetas minores/Commentaries on the Minor Prophets*:

"*The vision of Obadiah.* This, they say, is the Hebrew, who, under the Samaritan king Achab and the most impious Jezabel, fed in the caves the one hundred prophets who did not bow a knee to Baal, and who were from the seven thousand whom Elijah was shown to not have known [1 Ki. 18; 19:18]; and up to today his grave, with the tomb of the prophet Elisha and John the Baptist is held for veneration in Sebaste, which was once called Samaria. (King Herod of Judea, son of Antipater [the Idumaean], called this place Augustus in Greek in honor of Caesar Augustus.) Therefore he, because he had nourished one hundred prophets, accepted the prophetic gift: and from a leader of the army became a leader of the Church. Back then he fed a little flock in Samaria; today he feeds the Church of Christ in the whole world. And he is suitably named; just as in the Acts of the Apostles Stephen was crowned by martyrdom [Acts 7; the Greek *Stephanos* means 'crowned'], so too this servant was called 'of the Lord' [Obadiah means 'servant of God']. Furthermore, the reason why he sees what is determined against Idumaea not as a 'burden' (that is, a λήμμα) and a 'weight' according to the principle and distinction which we wrote in [the prologue to our commentary on the book of] Nahum, is that (1) either Edom, that is, Esau, is not reckoned among the foreign peoples, being the son of Isaac and brother of Jacob, and therefore his land is not given as a possession to Israel, nor is he sent to fight against him, and it was prohibited to arm against a brother, or (2) surely the vision is not of Idumaea (which could, if it were so written, create questioning) but of Obadiah, that is, the servant of the Lord, as he sees for the nations to whom the Lord sent as a messenger. And to whom it is said: 'Arise you all, let us stand up against her in battle.' In fact, the vision of Nahum is a destruction of Idumaea. But if, however, it is asked why 'the vision of Obadiah' was placed in the title and later nothing which was seen is shown, follow that [verse] of Isaiah [6:1]: 'I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and exalted.' And Ezekiel [1:1]: 'The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.' And it is quickly joined with: 'And I saw -- and behold -- a whirlwind was coming from the north, and a great cloud with brilliance around it.' [1:4] But after 'the vision of Obadiah' this is set forth: 'This the Lord says to Edom.' And again: 'Behold, I consign you to be very small among the nations.' We will take up an example from Deuteronomy [4:9], in which not things, but words are discerned: 'Pay attention,' [Moses] says, 'to yourself, and vigorously preserve your soul, so that you do not accidentally forget the sermons, which your eyes saw.' And John in his letter: '...which we saw with our eyes,' he says, 'which we observed, and which our hands touched: the Word of life.' [1 Jn. 1:1] And Moses says that the people saw the voice of God, which was spoken to them. [Ex. 20:18, Vulgate] If that which is said is set forth after 'vision', and that which is usually perceived by the ears is seen by the mind's eye, then, because the prophets were previously called seers, the label notates a vision, considering correctly." (PL 25, coll. 1099-1100. My translation.)

[4] For example: "Ephraim of Kashaha, a disciple of R. Mair, said in the name of his master: Obadiah was an Edomite proselyte. And this is what people say that the handle of the hatchet to cut the forest is taken from the wood of the same forest. And this also applies to David, who was a descendant of Moab (according to R. Johanan, in the name of Simeon b. Jo'hai), who smote them [2 Sam. 8:2]." (Rodkinson, Michael L. *New Edition of the Babylonian Talmud* vols. 7 and 8, p. 376 [New York: New Talmud Publishing Company, 1902])

Nicholas of Lyra, whose *Postilla super totam bibliam* Luther consulted in preparation for these lectures (see the footnotes below), relies heavily upon Rashi (i.e. Rabbi Solomon) and frequently references him. This may have been Luther's only source for Jewish interpretation. Lyra does not explicitly mention Rashi when determining who the prophet Odabiah was. He merely says "according to the Hebrew and Latin doctors this Obadiah was the steward of the house of Achab, king of Israel" (My translation). Nevertheless, Rashi himself thought that the prophet Obadiah was the same one of 1 Kings and that "[o]ur Sages of blessed memory stated: Obadiah was an Edomite proselyte" (*The Judaica Press complete Tanach with Rashi*, translated by A. J. Rosenberg, 1998 https://www.sefaria.org/Rashi_on_Obadiah.1.1?ven=english|The_Judaica_Press_complete_Tanach_with_Rashi,_translated_by_A._J._Rosenberg&lang=bi CC BY 3.0).

Yet both rabbinical sources still identify the prophet of the

exultabant et maximum gaudium capiebant ex davastatione et abductione Iudaeorum tempore captivitatis Babylonicae, id quod est cernere in psalmo 136: memor esto, domine, filiorum Edom in die Hierusalem, qui dicunt: exinanite, exinanite usque ad fundamentum in ea. Hoc est: memor esto domine et vindica in insultationem istam Iudmaeorum, qua insultarunt tuo populo tempore adversitatis, quando captivus abduceretur, memento quales fuerint tum cum excindebatur Hierusalem. Hoc est ut dixi quod me movet, cur putem Abdiam contemporaneum Hieremiae fuisse. Summa ergo prophetae est: prophetat adversus Idumaeos vindictam dei futuram eo, {p. 216} quod tempore captivitatis Babylonicae volupe eis fuerit misere adfligi et in captivitatem abduci Iudaeos, quorum tamen, quia fratres erant, debebant misereri. Deinde devastatis rursum illis gentibus, quae regnum Iuda devastaverant iudicio dei, transit ad regnum Christi quod futurum sit per euangelium in quo florere debeant reliquiae Ephraim, Israhel etc. Atque ita non videbitur dura transitio et recte omnia conveniunt inter se, quod alioqui in aliis interpretibus durissime cohaeret.

Yet to me by all counts it seems that he prophesied after the Babylonian Captivity[5] and took up his prophecy from Jeremiah, because certain places in this prophet indicate it, and most certain circumstances persuade that he was a contemporary of Jeremiah.[6] However, he instituted his prophecy against the Edomites who were exalting and who had the greatest joy from the devastation and abduction of the Jews at the time of the Babylonian Captivity, which is seen in Psalm 137[:7]: "Be mindful, Lord, of the sons of Edom in the day of Jerusalem, who said: 'Bring it down, you all, bring it down all the way to its foundation!' " That is: "Be mindful Lord, and avenge in an attack that nation of Edomites, with which they insulted your people in a time of adversity, when they were led away as captives. Be mindful of who they were at that time, when Jerusalem was razed." This is, as I said, what moves me to think why Obadiah was a contemporary of Jeremiah. Therefore the prophet's point is this: He prophesies God's vengeance against the Edomites which is about to be by him, because during the time of the Babylonian Captivity the Jews were desperately overthrown by them in pleasure, and led them away into captivity, yet, for whom, because they were brothers, they should have had compassion. In return, those nations were devastated who devastated the kingdom of Judah in God's judgment. Obadiah then crosses over to the kingdom of Christ, which is about to be through the Gospel, in which the remains of Ephraim, Israel, etc. should flourish. Therefore the crossing thus does not seem hard and everything rightly agrees among themselves, which are otherwise joined the most difficultly in other interpreters.

Haec dicit dominus deus de Edom: auditum (famam) adivimus Usus est metaphoris tractis a rebus bellicis ut perterrefaceret Idumaeos et calamitatem eis futuram exaggeraret. Est autem tracta metaphora a more bellico, quando solent mitti legati magnis de rebus adversos soliti componere amicos q[uasi]. d[icat]. reliqui reges et principes per legatos suos efficiunt res suas, ego per me ipsum expedio, per meum spiritum.

The Lord God says this about Edom: we heard news (a report) He used metaphors derived from matters of war so that he would make the Edomites terrified and exaggerate their future calamity. Yet the metaphor is derived from a custom of war, when messengers, who are used to making up friends, are accustomed to being sent to the enemy about great matters. It is like God said: "The other kings and princes affect their business through their messengers; through my very self I am unencumbered, through my spirit."

Surgite et consurgamus adversus eam in proelium Haec verba sunt legati, quibus ad praelium excitat gentes, quarum opera et ministerio usurus erat contra Idumaeos

Rise up you all, and let us rise up together against her in battle! These words are of the messenger, with which he excites the nations to battle, the works and service of which he will

book of Obadiah with the Obadiah under King Ahab. Luther then may have chiefly in mind the difference that Obadiah is considered an Edomite proselyte to Israel here.

[5] Jerome's Obadiah lived under King Ahab who died *ca.* 853 B.C. The Babylonian Captivity occurred in 587/6 B.C.

[6] Jeremiah prophesied during the Babylonians' siege of Jerusalem, preaching non-resistant surrender to them. Tradition says he was stoned to death after he was forcibly taken to Egypt.

devastandos.

2. *Ecce parvulum dedi te in gentibus* Premit fiduciam et elevat vires et fastum Edom, quo solebant contra Iudaeos insolescere. Acerbissima enim erant utrimque odia mutua, qualia esse solent fraterna odia et simultates, ἄσπονδος ergo πόλεμος erat Iudmaeis contra Iudaeos, non tam hoc nomine quod Esau praerepta esset benedictio a fratre Iacob, quam quod sub iugo Israhelis esse cogerentur, quod a cervicibus non poterant excutere nempe imbecilliores Israhele. Est ergo hic sententia q. d. dominus: tantam copiam et tam potentem gentium exercitum contra te excitabo, ut tu collatus ad eorum vires vix musca videberis et te prae se contemnent, pro nihilo aestimabunt, deglutient te, et nullus sis amplius.

3. *Superbia cordis tui extulit te* Rationem subiicit, quare ludibrio expositurus sit et in depraedationem Iudmaeos adversario exercitui: quia, inquit, tua opinione et tuis viribus tibi egregie places, insolescis, non diffidis tuis rebus, sicut et subiicit:

Quia habitus in scissuris petrarum Caussam indicat huius insolentiae, nempe munitam regionem, urbes et agros animare eos, ut sic superbiant. Nam etiam ex Moyse liquet petrosam esse hanc Idumaeorum terram, ut Deuteron. 2: circumivimus montem Seir longo tempore. Transibitis per terminos fratrum vestrorum filiorum Esau, qui habitant in Seir etc. Latini vocant Petraeam Arabiam, quae sortita est nomen a Zela, civitate insigni et praeclara Arabiae Petraeae. Zela autem Hebraeis petram significat. {p. 217} Huius Arabiae bona pars est terra Idumaeorum. Est ergo sententia loci: Tu confidis in tuis viribus, terram tuam esse montosam, ut non pateat aditus exercitui, itaque difficilem fore expugnatu, sed hanc spem eripiam tibi. Alludit autem Hebraico more ad Petram civitatem illam insignem q. d. urbem habes regiam et arcte munitam, petram scil., in cuius scissuris putas te securim fore, sed fallet te spes. tantum enim abest, ut in scissuris istis petrarum securus sis futurus ut et abstrusissimis locis, immo in tota tua terra exercitum

use against the Edomites, who are to be devastated.

2. *Behold, I have made you very small among the nations*. He presses down the confidence and lifts up the powers and pride of Edom, with which they were used to being arrogant against the Jews. For there were the harshest feelings and mutual hatred on both sides. Such brotherly hatred and enmity are usual, therefore there was a truceless battle by the Edomites against the Jews, not so much in the name of the theft of Esau's blessing by his brother Jacob, as that they were forced to be under the yoke of Israel, which they were not able to shake off their necks, because, of course, they were weaker than Israel. Therefore there is this sentiment, like God said: "I will excite against you such an abundance and so much military power of the nations, so that gathered together you will seem no more than a fly against their powers, and they will look down on you before themselves, they will estimate you to be nothing, they will flood down upon you, and you will be nothing anymore."

3. *The arrogance of your heart raises you* He reveals the reason why he will also expose the Edomites to mocking plundering for an enemy army. "Because," he says, "you please yourself remarkably with your confidences and your powers; you are arrogant; you do not despair in your own powers." Just as he also adds:

Because you occupy the clefts of the rocks He indicates the cause of this insolence: namely, that the fortified region excites their cities and fields, so that they thus are prideful. For it is also clear from Moses that this land of the Edomites is rocky, as in Deut. 2[:2-4]: "We went around Mount Seir for a long time. 'You will cross through the boundaries of the sons of your older brother Esau, who dwell in Seir, etc.' " The Latins call it Rocky Arabia,[7] which is chosen from Sela, the distinguished and illustrious city of Rocky Arabia. But Sela means rock in Hebrew.[8] The good part of this Arabia is the land of the Edomites. Therefore the sentiment of the place is: "In your powers you trust that your land is mountainous, so that an approach for an army is not clear, and so that it is difficult to conquer, but I will snatch away this hope from you." Yet in Hebrew fashion he mockingly alludes to that distinguished rocky city, as if he were to say: "You have a royal and tightly defended city, really like rock, in whose clefts you think that you will be secure, but hope will deceive you. For safety is so far away that you will not

[7] Arabia Petraea.
[8] סֶלַע, meaning rock or cliff.

contra te venturum non poteris latere.

be secure in those clefts of rocks or the most hidden places, in fact, you will not be able to hide in all your land from the army that will come against you."

Exaltasti sedem i.e. habes munitas arces in montibus.

You place your home high up. That is: "You have fortified citadels in the mountains."

Quis deducet me in terram Describit fastum et insolentiam eorum et confidentiam de viribus, nempe non esse fisos auxilio et protectione domini sed suis munitionibus et petris. Sed audi, inquit, quantumvis sis munita tuis viribus et munitionibus, tamem spem omnem tibi eripiam, prorsus redigeris in nihilum atque adeo ut

"Who will take me down to the ground?" He describes their contempt, arrogance, and confidence in their powers -- certainly they did not trust in God's help and protection, but in their fortifications and rocks. "But listen," he says, "however much you may be fortified in your powers and fortifications, I will still take all hope from you; you will be reduced to nothing and exactly so that..."

4. *Si exaltareris sicut aquila et inter stellas poneres nidum etc.* Usque adeo non potest deus optimus maximus confidentiam nostri ferre, odit fiducias carnis, superbiam et insolentiam impiorum cordium, ut passim est cernere in omni scriptura, quod nos a brachio carnis, a confidentia nostri avocat, ut in se speremus, tum fore nos securos etc.

4. *If you were high as an eagle and were to place your nest among the stars etc.* Up until now God Almighty continuously cannot bear our own confidence. He hates faith in flesh, arrogance and the pride of impious hearts, so that it is discerned throughout all of scripture that he calls us away from the arm of flesh and from our own confidence, so that we hope in him, and then we will be secure, etc.

5. *Si fures venissent tibi* Summa loci est: potius optare deberes, ut fures et latrones impetum facerent in tuam terram et ex ea praedam agerent (nam remaneret tibi aliquid, non depraedarentur omnia) quam ut ego contra te veniam, qui usque adeo omnia perquiram et obstrusissima quaeque pervestigabo in omnibus cavernis montium, ut nihil tibi remaneat, ut omnia pereant et vos quoque una pereatis.

5. *If thieves had come to you* The point of the section is: "You ought to rather choose that thieves and robbers make an attack on your land and take loot from it (for he will leave something for you; not everything will be plundered) than that I arrive against you, as I will continuously and precisely search everywhere and explore through each and every most hidden place in all the mountain caves, so that nothing will remain for you, so that everything may perish and that together each one of you all may perish."

6. *Quomodo conticuisses.* Varius est unus huius verbi in scriptura, varie quoque interpretes reddiderunt. Est in 4. capito Ozeae: tacere feci matrem tuam. Et in psalmo 48, ubi nos legimus: homo cum esset in honore non intellexit, comparatus est iumentis. Item psalmo 4: cubilibus vestris compungite. Signiticat autem proprie: aliquid in silentium et in nihilum redigere, ita demoliri aliquod regnum aut populum aliquem, ut vix vestigia adpareant, ut conticescant neque audeant mutire etc. Sicut Germani dicunt {p. 218} de aliquo, qui suo malo doctus est: *Er ist ßo feyn stil worden*. Eadem per omnia hic est sententia q. d. *ey ich wil dich feyn kleyn machen, du ßolt recht stil werden.* Talis enim est futura ista tua calamitas veniente me cum exercitu meo contra te, ut insultus furum et latronum quantumvis magni ad hanc

6. *How you*[9] *would have fallen silent!* This word in scripture is diverse, and translators have also diversely rendered it. It is in the fourth chapter of Hosea: "I made your mother silent." [4:5] And in Psalm 49[:20], where we read: "Man did not understand when he was in esteem; he is compared to a mule [and will be made silent]." Also Psalm 4[:4]: "Feel sorry, you all, in your seats [and be silent]." Yet on its own it means: he reduces something into silence and oblivion, so that hardly footprints are visible, so that they fall silent and do not dare to make a sound, etc. Just as Germans speak about someone, who was taught by his own evil: "He has become so very silent." Through it all, this is the same sentiment, as if he were to say: "Hey! I will make you very small; you should become really quiet. For such is that future

[9] i.e. Edom

collati prorsus non iudicandi sint insultus aut depraedatio. optandum esset tibi, ut opprimereris et in silentium redigereris oppressus a furibus, sed non sunt ista conferenda cum excisione, quando ego veniam etc. Nam ego non relinquam tibi ullum racemum, omnia abscondita proferam. Haec sive pecunia fuerint sive homines, quos te servaturum sperabas. Adeo me vastante nihil evadet.

disaster of yours coming by me with my power against you, that however great an attack of thieves and robbers on this hill, they are going to be entirely judged as not an attack or plundering. You should have chosen that you would be crushed and reduced into silence in the pressure from thieves, but those are not to be compared with that razing when I will come, etc. For I will not leave behind a single bunch of grapes for you; I will bring forth all that is hidden. Whether these would be money or men, which you were hoping to protect you, truly nothing will escape when I devastate."

7. *Usque ad terminum emiserunt te* Eadem est phrasis, quae est in Esa. cap. 5: agrum agro copulatis usque ad terminum loci. Est ergo sententia: expellent te et emittent usque ad terminos sive fines terrae tuae, prorsus te eiicient ex tua terra, ut non sis habiturus fines.

7. *They have hurled you right to the border* is the same phrase, which is in Isa. 5: "you join field to field right to the end of the land." [5:8] Therefore this is the sentiment: "They will expel you and hurl you to the borders or ends of your land; you will be entirely thrown out of your land, so that you will not have borders."

Omnes viri foederis tui illuserunt tibi Tollit omnem eorum confidentiam: usque adeo nihil fore in quo possint fidere ingruente vastatione, ut non solum munitissimae civitates et arces non sint profuturae sed et vicinos populos confoederatos cum eis falsuros et non staturos foedere.

All your allied men duped you He takes away all of their confidence: there is about to be precisely nothing in which they are able to trust with the ravaging breaking in, so that the most fortified cities and citadels are not only not going to be useful, but also the allied neighboring peoples are going to deceive them and the league will not stand.

Non est prudentia Hoc est, quod nos germanice docimus: *Du nar, du merckst nicht*, non animadvertis frustra te sperare in brachium carnis, nam futurum est tibi baculus harundineus, quo si te fulcire volueris, corrues. nulla prudentia, nullum consilium, nullae vires tibi proderunt, infatuabo etiam tuos sapientes, ut mutato consilio tibi repugnent, quos a te staturos confidis. Hoc est, quod Ezech. 23. ait: ecce ego suscitabo omnes amatores tuos contra te, de quibus satiata est anima tua et congregabo eos adversum te in circuitu tuo etc. Et Hierem. 30: omnes amatores tui obliti sunt tui etc. Idem per omnia accidit Constantinopolitanis, dum Turcam sibi in societatem adiunxerunt, paulo post Turcae tributarii facti sunt. Sic saepe nostris quoque temporibus cum imperatore et papa evenit, ut dum imperator papam confideret a se stare, icto scil. foedere, cum ad rem ventum est, papa mutato consilio adversatus est Caesari etc. Idem et Iudaei experti sunt, dum Romanorum amicitiam ambirent putantes se victores evasuros contra omnes gentes: quos auxiliarios cupierant, statim dominos sunt experti. Et hoc est, quod elegantissime

There is no good sense As we school in German: "You fool, you don't get it." This [verse] means: "You do not notice that you hope in vain in the arm of flesh, for the bundle of reeds is to be for you; if you want to support yourself with it, you will tumble. No foresight, no counsel, no powers will be useful to you; I will even make a fool of your wise men, so that they will clash in shifting counsel for you, whom you trust to stand by you." This is what Eze. 23[:22] says: "Look here! I will rouse all your lovers against you, whom your soul was satisfied on and will assemble them against you around your perimeter." And Jere. 30[:14] says: "All your lovers have forgotten you," etc. The same thing happened to everyone in Constantinople, while they joined themselves to the Turk in a partnership, just a little while later they were made a tributary of the Turk.[10] So it turns out similarly in our time with the emperor and pope: while the emperor trusts the pope to stand by him, namely, when he has hit upon an alliance, when it comes down to it, the pope with shifting counsel is against the caesar, etc. The Jews also tried out the same thing while they went around

[10] Constantinople became a vassal during the second half of the 14th century. (*Encyclopædia Britannica* "Fall of Constantinople")

dicunt Latini homines: quaerendos esse amicos pares et cavendum esse a potentioribus. {p. 219}

campaigning for a friendship with the Romans -- thinking of themselves as victors over (and about to escape) all the nations: they whom they had wanted as auxiliaries, right away were proven to be masters.[11] And it is this which the Latin people say most elegantly: for friends one has to dare for equals and beware of the more powerful.[12]

8. *Perdam sapientes de Idumaea.* Non solum externum praesidium, arma, vim, munitiones minatur se ablaturum, ne possint esse tuti sed et sapientes qui consilio adsint motibus istis. Habuit enim haec terra sapientes et prudentes homines sicut et Esau fuit, sed hos omnes dicit se infatuaturum et perditurum. Huc spectant passim multi scripturae loci de confusione sapientiae humanae et consiliorum carnis. Psalm. 106: Turbati sunt et moti sunt sicut ebrius et omnis sapientia eorum devorata est. Et psalm. 32: dominus dissipat consilia gentium. Adeo non potest caro in tempore tentationis consilio et sapientia sua sibi mederi.

8. *I will destroy the wise of Edom.* He does not just threaten the external protection, arms, power, and defenses which he is about to snatch away so that they are not able to be safe, but also the wise, who in their counsel help the commotion. For this land had wise and sensible men just as Esau also was, but he says that he is about to make a fool of and destroy them all. Many places in Scripture observe the confusion of human wisdom and of the counsel of flesh. Ps. 107[:27]: "They are agitated and in motion just like a drunk and all their wisdom is devoured." And Ps. 33[:10]: "The Lord disperses the counsel of the nations." The flesh is not at all able to heal in the time of trial by its counsel and wisdom.

9. *Et timebunt fortes tui Theman* Rectius: pavidi erunt fortes tui, *fluchtig und schuchtern werden*. Significat enim proprie pavorem illum, qui solet invadere exercitum aliquem in bello concidendum, quando scil. non vident, qua evadant. Et quod in nostra translatione adpellativo nomine redditum est, proprio nomine legi debet: in Theman. Sic enim terram istam vocat, cui a suo nomine (ut solent principes et reges nonunquam) indiderat nomen Theman, nepos Esau, de quo est in Genesi.

9. *And your strong men will be afraid, Teman.* Rightly understood: "your strong men will be scared, becoming fugitives and timid" For it properly signifies that panic which usually invades some army about to be slain in war when, specifically, they do not see how they will escape. And what in our translation is rendered as a common noun,[13] should properly be read as a name: in Teman. For he thus calls that land, to which, from his name, (as princes and kings usually do) he gave the name Teman, the descendant Esau, who is in Genesis [36:11].

[11] A perhaps reference to the Roman Empire's conquest of Jerusalem under Pompey by 63 B.C. or the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70 with the ensuing political tensions to both. Leading men such as Philo of Alexandria (*ca.* 20 B.C. – *ca.* 50 A.D.) and Flavius Josephus (*ca.* 37 AD – *ca.* 100) and are known to have had influence in Romanizing Judaism and to have attempted to make it more palatable to a Greco-Roman audience. The latter was captured and made a slave by Vespasian when leading Jews as a general in the First Jewish-Roman War. He was later freed and thought was an advisor and companion to Vespasian's son Titus. It was his work as an interpreter that assisted the siege of Jerusalem. The former was a member of a delegation to the Roman emperor Caligula in 38 A.D. to prevent the installation of his statue in the Temple. He also worked to harmonize Greek philosophy with the Old Testament; see Sierksma-Agteres, Suzan *Paul and the Philosophers' Faith* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2024) 327-338 for a particular analysis of his understanding of the word faith. It is needless to say that neither one's work in the upper reaches of politics saved Israel from complete subjugation under Hadrian (see the footnote below).

[12] Luther highly esteemed Aesop's fables and may have in mind his *The Two Pots* here. While Greek and not Latin, Luther may nevertheless be thinking of subsequent adoption of the ideals expressed there by later Latin thinkers. One of these was Avianus in his *Fabulae*. He adapted *The Two Pots*, still expressing the ever-present fear of one more powerful than oneself despite assurances to the contrary. (Fable 11. Duff and Duff, *Minor Latin Poets* [London and Cambridge, MA: Heinemann and Harvard University Press,1934] 699, 701)

In fact, Luther explained the apocrypha's role in the believer's life by drawing a parallel to the benefit which can be received from reading this collection of fables. There is even a verse in the apocryphal Ecclesiasticus which gives similar advice: "Don't take up a burden above your strength. Have no fellowship with one who is mightier and richer than yourself. What fellowship would the earthen pot have with the kettle? The kettle will strike, and the pot will be dashed in pieces." (Ecclus. 13:2, World English Bible)

[13] The Vulgate has *a meridie*: "to the south." The WA editors chose to document "Theman" instead.

Ut intereat vir de monte Esau In hebraeo: prae mactatione etc. Ita curabo, ut eradicetur vir de monte Esau, non remaneat aliquis superstes. Caeterum in hebraeo longe significantius est, quam ut possit commode in aliam linguam transfundi, q. d. *es wirth hie eyn hauff liegen und dorth eyn hauff*, occidentur passim in urbibus, si qui volent resistere et sic misera ista clade conterrentur tui sapientes, ut prorsus obbrutescant etc.

So that the men from Mount Esau will perish. In Hebrew: "in the slaughtering etc." "Thus, I will see to it that the men from mount Esau are eradicated; no one will remain standing." In Hebrew the rest is by far more meaningful than is able to be nicely transferred into another language; it is as if he were to say: "There will be a pile here and a pile there, they will be killed everywhere in the cities, if they want to resist; and so, your wise men are terrified by that miserable ruin, so that they become entirely irrational."

11. *In die cum stares* Haec est caussa, cur ita irascitur eis. Atque hinc clare patet, id quod de tempore prophetae dixi initio huius capitis, quod prophetarit circa tempus captivitatis Babylonicae.

11. *On the day when you stood by* This is the reason why he is angry with them. And from this it is very clear (as far as I spoke on the time of the prophet at the start of this chapter) that he prophesied around the time of the Babylonian Captivity.

Exercitum rectius facultatem. Atque hic locus me movet, cur putarim hunc prophetam floruisse tempore captivitatis Babylonicae, quia Hierusalem nunquam est capta ante captivitatem illa Chaldaeorum.

Forces rightly understood as resources. And this part moves me to think that this prophet flourished during the time of the Babylonian Captivity, because Jerusalem was never captured before that Chaldean captivity.

12. *Et non despicies* In hebraeo: ideo non videbis. nec tamen simpliciter 'videre' significat verbum illud hebraeum sed id quod germanice dicimus: *Du wirst nicht mehr deyn lust ßehen*, non titillabis tete amplius adversis rebus fratris tui.

12. *And you will not look down on* In Hebrew: "Therefore you will not see." Yet, neither does "to see" simply mean that Hebrew word, but as we say in German: "You will not see your desire anymore;" you will not be tickled any more by the adverse matters of your brother.

Magnificabis os tuum Non amplius insultabis ei in tempore adflictionis, siquidem et in te calamitatum grando incidet.

You will [not] boast. "You will not jeer at him in the time of affliction; accordingly, the hailstorm of disasters will also fall onto you."

In die perditionis Duo tantum sunt hic vocabula in hebraeo sed interpres latinus intempestiva copia delectatus iam perditionem iam angustiam, iam ruinam etc. vertit.

In the day of destruction. In Hebrew there are just two nouns for this,[14] but the Latin translator was fascinated with the abundance of unreasonables: he changes them to *perditionem,* now *angustiam*, now *ruinam*, etc.

14. *Et non stabis in exitibus* Vocabulum hebraeum utrumque significat: et ereptionem et vastationem, ut est cernere in psalmo 49: ne {p. 220} quando rapiat et non sit, qui eripiat. Ita et hic utrumque intelligi potest. Est autem sententia: Tu Edom non contentus eras ut depraedarere fratrem tuum, ut diriperes ei suas facultates, quando me instigante mittebaris cum reliquis gentibus contra eum sed

14. *And you will not stand at the exits* The Hebrew noun[15] separately means both seizure and laying waste, as is to be found in Psalm 50[:22]: "For fear that when he pillages there will not be one who rescues."[16] And this other one is thus able to be understood. But this is the sentiment: "You Edom were not content, so that you plundered your brother of everything, so that by it you tore to pieces his

[14] As the editors of the American Edition point out, it is unclear which Hebrew words Luther would have had in mind as there are not simply two options for "destruction." In v. 12 there is נֵכָר or *peregrinatio* (misfortune, BSB), אבד or *perditio* (destruction, BSB), and צָרָה or *angustia* (distress, BSB). In v. 13: אֵיד or *ruina/vastitas* (disaster, BSB). In v. 14: פָּרָק or *exitus* (crossroads, BSB. lit. plunder) צָרָה or *tribulatio* (distress, BSB). Here the translation "destruction" comes from אבד of v. 12.

[15] פָּרַק

[16] Ps. 50 has הַצִּיל instead of its synonym פָּרַק.

et retinuisti et moratus es eos, qui volebant sibi fuga consulere atque ita retentos placuit occidi.

resources, when you, urged by me, were sent with the remaining nations against him, but you both held them back and kept them behind -- those who wanted to advise flight to you -- and so it was pleasing to kill the delayers."

Non concludes Hoc est: eos qui non poterant fugere, pressisti et ursisti, ne non omnes occiderentur.

You will not be cut off This means: them, who were not able to flee, you have oppressed and squeezed, scared that not all of them were killed.

Quoniam sicut tu bibisti super montem sanctum meum. Minatur omnibus gentibus vastationem q. d. concoquam te et alias gentes omnes, vastabimini una, sicut populum meum vastastis, deglutivistis et bibistis mea bona in sanctuario meo, sed faxo, ut alii populi tua vicissim omnia consumant et deglubant. Sic miro iudicio deus optimus maximus semper novis peccatis quorundam, quos excitat, punit vetera peccata alicuius regni sicut hic videmus. Peccarunt gentes quae populum dei misere afflixerant. Hic minatur dominus huius peccati vindictam, futurum ut aliae gentes contra depraedatores istos sint venturae atque ita puniatur peccatum illud vetus novo quodam. Sic Tartari et Gothi novis peccatis venerunt contra vetera peccata Romanorum, qui Iudaeos miris modis presserant. Hodie potens est Turca, sed si non statim interiturus est mundus, veniet fortior aliquis, qui iudidio dei excitatus Turcam

Because just as you drank on my holy mountain. He threatens all nations with ravaging. It is as if he were to say: "I will cook you and all other peoples down; all at once you all will be ravaged, just as you ravaged, swallowed up, and drank my people in my sanctuary, but I will have acted so that other peoples in turn consume and flay all of you." Thus God in amazing judgment punishes the old sin of some kingdoms by the new sin of those whom he excites, just as we see here. The nations sinned which had miserably overthrown the people of God. The Lord threatens upcoming vengeance for this sin, so that other nations are about to come against those pillagers and so punish that old sin with a new one. So the Tartars and the Goths came in new sin against the old sin of the Romans,[17] who oppressed the Jews in an extraordinary way. Today the Turk is powerful,[18] but if the world is not about to immediately die,[19] someone stronger should

[17] Alaric, the king of the Visigoths, sacked Rome in 410. The ambiguous mention of Tartars may simply mean people from the east. This is likely a reference to the widespread eastern frontier invasions that occurred under the reign of the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (r. 161 - 180) and which caused severe imperial strain. Clearly this came before the Gothic sack of Rome and would make sense to list first.

[18] The Turks had made continual conquests towards Europe in the decades leading up to and during the Reformation. The general populace held constant anxiety about the susceptibility of the German lands, and the Siege of Vienna (1529) was close enough to home to make the threat a reality. Emperor Charles V, to whom Luther gave the responsibility to lead the united cause against the Turks (see his *On War Against the Turk*, 1529 [WA 30II, (81) 107-148|AE 46, (153) 161-205|PE 5, 79-123]), was concerned enough about the existential threat that he called the Diet of Augsburg (1530) to settle religious dispute. It was his hope to then have an unfractured people and princes whom he could call upon for his army. This is, naturally, the meeting which produced the authoritative *Augsburg Confession*.

[19] Luther frequently mentions his opinion that the world is ripe for the coming of Christ. For example, in *On War Against the Turk* (1529) he sees a warning in the decline of the Holy Roman Empire. He says: "What a man cannot lift, he must let it lie. If we can do no more, we must let our Lord Jesus Christ counsel and aid us, by His coming, which cannot be far off. For the world has come to its end; the Roman Empire is almost gone and torn to bits; it stands as the kingdom of the Jews stood when Christ's birth was near; the Jews had scarcely anything of their kingdom, Herod was the token of farewell. And so, I think, now that the Roman Empire is almost gone, Christ's coming is at the door, and the Turk is the Empire's token of farewell, a parting gift to the Roman Empire; and just as Herod and the Jews hated each other, though both made common cause against Christ, so Turk and papacy hate each other, but make common cause against Christ and His kingdom." (PE 5, 118 | WA 30II, 143-144 | AE 46, 199-200) This analysis of the final years of the Roman Empire corresponding to the final years of the world is largely based on Luther's understanding of Daniel. In his *Preface to the Prophet Daniel* (1530), Luther unites the symbolism of the four kingdoms of 2:31-43, which he interpreted in order as Assyria and Babylon, Persia and Media, that of Alexander the Great, and the Roman Empire with the four beasts of 7:2-7. In his comments there Luther says: "For under the very Roman Empire the greatest event on earth was supposed to take place, namely, that Christ should come and redeem men, and the world should come to its end." (AE 35, 299 from EA 41, 237-258, 294, 321-324| WA DB 11II, 1f.) Luther's understanding of the valid continuation of the Roman Empire in what we would call the Holy Roman Empire is that "just as in the human body the toes separate while projecting from and belonging to the foot [Dan. 2:41], so also was the Roman empire split, as Spain, France, England, and other parts came out of it. Nevertheless, it has continued to grow and, like a plant, has been transplanted, or (as they say) transferred [*translatum*] from the Greeks to the Germans." (AE 35, 295) In a marginal note on 2:41, Luther understands the same verse to be fulfilled in the crowning of Charlemagne on Christmas Day, 800 by Pope Leo III (WA DB 11II, 138). The argument is that

subiiciet etc. Hactenus est prima pars huius prophetiae de comminatione excidii Idumaeorum per alias gentes, quas ego Romanos intelligo.

come, who, excited with the judgment of God, will subjugate the Turk, etc.

Up to here the first part of this prophecy is on the threat of military ruin of the Edomites through other nations, which I understand as the Romans.

17. *Et in monte Sion erit salvatio* Haec posterior pars est huius prophetiae, in qua abductis in captivitatem Iudaeis et vastatis rursum Idumaeis, qui Iudaeis insultaverant, promittit aliud regnum quod non potest aliud intelligi nisi regnum spirituale Christi per euangelium propalatum in omnes gentes. Divisus erat populus Iudaicus in duo regna, in regnum Israhel quod nunquam erat rursum reparabile semel devastatum et in regnum Iuda, quod mutatum est in regnum Christi. Id quod summopere necessarium est intelligi ab iis, qui prophetas legunt, in quorum libris crebra fit horum duorum renorum mentio. Itaque scire refert loqui hic prophetam de spirituali regno Christi, id quod ipsa litera nos coget credere, nam cum inquit:

17. *And there will be salvation on Mount Zion.* This is the second part of this prophecy, in which (the Jews having been led away into captivity, and in turn the Edomites having been ravaged, who assaulted the Jews) he sends out another kingdom which one is not able to understand as any other than the spiritual kingdom of Christ through the manifest Gospel in all people. The Jewish people were divided into two kingdoms: in the kingdom of Israel which was never able to be repaired again once devastated, and the kingdom of Judah, which changed into the kingdom of Christ. It is exceedingly necessary that this be understood by readers of the prophets, in whose books mention is constantly made of these two facts. Therefore, it matters to know that this prophet speaks about the spiritual kingdom of Christ, which the letters themselves compel us to believe, for when he says:

Possidebit domus Iacob eos, qui se possederant indicat domum Iacob recuperaturum sibi regnum et dilataturum ac sibi subiecturum eos, quorum dominium antea est perpessa. Id quod significat verbum illud in hebraeo, quod noster interpres reddidit per verbum possidere sed non reddidit {p. 221} vim hebraeae vocis, significat enim proprie id quod Germani dicunt *einnemen.* Hoc tam magnificum verbum non potest convenire aut regno Iudae externo aut Israhelis, quandoquidem Israheliticum regnum nunquam erat restituendum, id quod aperte liquet ex historiis sacris. Itaque pugnantia illa urget nos, ut de spirituali regno

The house of Jacob will seize them who had seized him indicates that the house of Jacob is about to recuperate and expand the kingdom for himself and subject them to himself, whose dominion was previously endured to the full. That is what that word in Hebrew means,[20] which our translator renders through the word "seize," but he hardly renders it in the Hebrew voice, for it really means what Germans call 'take'. This very great word is not able to fit either the external kingdom of Judah or Israel, since the kingdom of the Israelites never was to be restored, which is manifestly proven from the sacred histories.[21] Therefore that fighting[22]

the quality of the empire, iron, is preserved.

A second example of Luther holding that the end of the world was soon is in his lectures on 1 Pet. 4:8. Here Luther says that it is not expected that Christ will wait 2,000 or 3,000 years after his birth to return (WA 12, 377 | AE 30, 122). This pessimistic conclusion, as the AE editors point out, was not the result of analyzing a single event but from recognizing the Devil at working against the spread of the Gospel in the Peasants' War, Erasmus' and the humanists' disagreement on the bondage of the will, the Turks' continual progression towards Germany, and various natural disasters. The editors of AE explain that "[a]ll of this … seemed to be signs of the approaching end of the world. … Luther thought that the surest way to lose the battle would be to side with [the Devil] by using his weapons and strategy [of many fronts]" (AE 46, 18, n. 3). I would add that he particularly saw the end of the Roman Empire in all of these events, which, as already stated, was to be when Christ would return in Luther's understanding.

It is worth noting that in his *Supputatio annorum mundi/Computation of the Years of the World* of 1541/5 (WA 53, 1-184) Luther makes no explicit mention of the end of the world; he instead opts to present it as a study aid for understanding the periods of the Bible and which one each individual falls into. In fact, he says that that is exactly how he used it himself. An English translation has been done by Kenneth Miller and is accessible on Dropbox.

[20] יָרַשׁ

[21] After the Kingdom of Israel was conquered by the Assyrians, it became the land of the Samaritans until the time of Jesus.

[22] There is perhaps an intentional ambiguous choice of word here (see the two footnotes below on *praedicatio*). "That fighting" may be understood to refer to Jacob's fighting as described by Obadiah, or, as AE 18 suggests, the contradictions itself between the historical reality and the imagery of the prophecy.

Christi intelligamus nempe futuros esse ex populo Israhelitico apostolos et discipulos alios Christi, qui nova praedicatione euangelii totum orbem essent sibi subiecturi sicque instituturi novum regnum et aeternum. Atque hoc est, quod dicit:

constrains us to understand [here] the spiritual kingdom of Christ that it is certainly going to be the apostles and other disciples of Christ from the Israelite population, who were by the preaching[23] of the Gospel about to subjugate the whole world to themselves and thus going to institute the new and eternal kingdom. And so this is what he says:

In monte Sion fore evansionem vel salvationem novam hoc est, ex Sion exituram talem praedicationem, quae credita liberaret a monte, peccato et inferis, hancque primum ex Sion venturam esse, sicut et Esaias ait cap. 2: de Sion exibit lex et verbum domini de Hierusalem. Et Iohelis 2: in Hierusalem erit salvatio.

On Mount Zion there will be exit or salvation, that is, such preaching[24] is about to leave from Zion, which, when believed, frees from sin and hell, and this first was about to come from Zion, just as Isaiah also says in ch. 2: "From Zion the law is sent forth and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." [2:3] And Joel 2[:32]: "In Jerusalem there will be salvation."

Et erit sanctus i.e. non poterit amplius pollui a gentibus ut antea factum est.

And it will be sacred that is, it will not be able to be polluted any more by the people as it was before.

18. *Et erit domus Iacob ignis etc.* In ista universali omnium gentium subiectione dicit etiam Idumaeos esse huic regno subiiciendos. Absurda omnia sunt et pugnant cum historia, si corporalem subiectionem intelligamus, nam quid minus convenit quam domum Iacob fore ignem et domum Ioseph flammam et domum Esau hoc est, Idumaeos fore stipulam, quae sit a flamma devoranda. Ad haec domus Ioseph post captivitatem Babylonicam nunquam rediit neque domus Iuda unquam possedit Iudmaeos, postremo hoc omnium est absurdius, quod cum antea prophetarit Idumaeos omnes perituros et in nihilum redigendos, hic tandem dicat etiam igni devorandos. Itaque omnino cogunt nos ista, ut de divulgato per apostolos et per alios discipulos ex Israhel euangelio in omnes gentes intelligamus, qua praedicatione devorarunt i. e. incorporaverunt regno Christi spiritualiter, ne possent amplius de manu Christi rapi, ut ait Chrisitus in euangelio. Vere enim semel adprehenso euangelio non facile satan praevalet. Id quod factum est, ut indicant annales. Nam Arabia illa Petraea, in qua fuerunt Idumaei, insignis locus fuit sanctorum hominum euangelio revelato, fuit illic sanctus Antonius et complures alii sancti patres. {p. 222}

18. *And the house Jacob will be fire.* In that universal subjugation of all nations he says that even the Edomites are to be subjects in this kingdom. Everything is discordant and fights with history if we understand corporeal subjection [here], for what fits less than the house of Jacob about to be fire and the house of Joseph flame, and the house of Esau, that is, the Edomites, about to be stubble, which is to be devoured by the flame? Relevant to this:

- after the Babylonian Captivity the house of Joseph never returned;
- nor did the house of Judah ever occupy the Edomites;
- finally, this is most unreasonable of all: that, although he prophesied earlier that all of the Edomites were going to perish and were going to be reduced to nothing, he says at the end here that even they are to be devoured by fire.

Therefore we are entirely forced by it to understand [here] the proclamation of Gospel in all nations through the apostles and through the other disciples from Israel, by which preaching they engulfed, that is, spiritually formed the kingdom of Christ, so that they cannot be snatched from Christ's hand, as Christ says in the Gospel [John 10:28]. For truly Satan cannot easily prevail once the Gospel is grasped. This has happened, as the annals indicate. For that Rocky Arabia, which the Edomites were in, has been a notable place of holy men since the Gospel was revealed; St.

[23] Luther has chosen a deliberately ambiguous word here. The Latin noun *praedicatio* literally means the act of speaking before. That is, either speaking before a crowd (as in preaching), or speaking before an event occurs (as in prophecy).

[24] Another ambiguous use of *praedicatio*.

Non erunt reliquiae Adeo subiugabit sibi domum Esau, ut ne reliquiae quidem remansurae sint, nihil erit quod contra hoc regnum Christi possit praevalere. Nam per euangelium Christiani fiunt domini omnium creaturarum. Haec de vi et efficacia praedicati euangelii in gentes.

Et possidebunt hi qui ad austrum sunt etc. Mira est hic contradictio, si literam et externum quoddam regnum intelligas. Primum dicit: possidebunt, deinde: possidebuntur. Regnum Israel in duodecim tribus erat divisum et diligenter lege Moysi cautum erat, ne tribus inter se miscerentur, id quod est cernere in Moyse. Quandoquidem ergo aperte hic dicat Autrales, hoc est qui sunt ad austrum, possessuros esse montem Esau etc., omnino aliter intelligendum est, quam ut habet litera. Est ergo sententia: Chrisiani apostoli et alii discipuli, qui futuri sunt ad austrum in monte Sion scil., in quo primum praedicatur euangelium, ii inquam sua praedicatione fructum facient in Idumaeis.

Et campestria (Rectius: humilia, valles inter montes amoeni, *die grunde*) possidebunt Philistaeos, id quod nunquam corporaliter factum est post captivitatem Babylonicam. nam etiam totum regnum non potuit superare et subiicere sibi Philistaeos. Igitur de spirituali illa subiectione per euangelium intelligendum est.

Ephraim Etiam hoc contra legem est. Igitur per apostolos id factum est, quando iverunt in Samariam nuntiaturi euangelium. Similiter etiam id quod sequitur.

Anthony[25] was from there and many other holy fathers.

There will not be any left over This is how far he will subjugate the house of Esau to him, so that, indeed, the survivors do not remain; nothing which will be against this kingdom of Christ will be able to prevail. For through the Gospel Christians become lords of all of creation.

So much about the power and efficacy of the preaching of the Gospel in the nations.

And these ones who are toward the south will seize etc. This is a bewildering contradiction if you were to understand the words here as a specific external kingdom. First he says: "they will seize," then: "they will be seized." The kingdom of Israel was divided into twelve tribes and by the law of Moses it had been well precautioned so that the tribes would not mix [*miscerentur*] among themselves, as one can distill [*cernere*] from Moses [Num. 36:9]. Therefore, since he openly says that southerners,[26] (that is, they who are to the south) are about to occupy [the land], it in its entirety must be understood differently than as the passage has it. Therefore, this is the sentiment: the Christian apostles and other disciples who are about to be to the south on the Mountain of Zion, namely, on which the Gospel is first preached, they (I say) made fruit by their preaching among the Edomites.

And [the people of] the plains (Correctly: the lowly; valleys between mountains of pleasant sights; the grounds) will occupy the Philistines, which never happened corporally after the Babylonian Captivity; for even during the entire kingdom it was not able to rise above and subject the Philistines to itself. Therefore, it must be understood as that spiritual subjugation through the Gospel.

Ephraim Even this is against the law. Therefore, it happened through the apostles, when they went into Samaria to announce the Gospel. [Acts 8:1f.] And that which follows is also similar.

[25] Luther also mentions St. Anthony in his lectures on 1 Timothy (Aug. 1527 – Mar. 1528). Here he criticizes the hermits for choosing to live a life in the wilderness which is unable to serve a neighbor. The Paul Luther references is Paul of Thebes from Jerome's *Vita S. Pauli primi eremitae/ The life of St. Paul the First Hermit* (374). The second man, St. Anthony (*ca.* 227 – *ca.* 341) is regarded as the founder of Christian monasticism.

"The appearance of Paul [of Thebes] and Anthony really is impressive: they lived in the wild desert, but [it was] for themselves. Paul and Anthony, you all were saints. But the Bishop Himself shut you out: "do not omit" "the weightier matters of the law" Christ says [Matt. 23:23]. If a monk is in a cloister, who does he helpfully serve? No one; neither does he pray on behalf of the church, nor take care of it." (WA 26, 77. My translation.)

[26] Those of the Negeb.

Beniamin possidebit Gilead Beniamin citra Iordanem est, Gilead vero ultra Iordanem in tribu Gad. Igitur necessitas cogit nos, ut omnia ad praedicationem euangelii referamus.

Benjamin will occupy Gilead Benjamin is this side of[27] the Jordan, but truly Gilead is beyond[28] the Jordan in the tribe of Gad. Therefore, necessity forces us to refer everything to the preaching of the Gospel.

20. *Et transmigratio exercitus etc.* Hoc vero longe prioribus est absurdius, nempe eos pressuros esse totum terram Chananaeorum, qui tamen in captivitatem sunt abducti neque unquam reducti quo si literam tantum spectes, quid dici potest absurdius? Idem est, quod sequitur de transmigratione Hierusalem, hoc est captivos ex Israhel possessuros esse civitates austri hoc est, eas civitates quae circa Hierusalem et in Edom sitae sunt.

20. *And the emigrants of the army etc.* Truly this is by far more discordant than the previous ones; certainly what can be called more nonsensical (if you look only at the text) than that they were about to oppress the whole land of Canaan, who yet were led away into captivity and not once led back? It is the same which follows concerning the emigration of Jerusalem; that is, the captives from Israel about to possess the cities of the south,[29] that is those cities which are around Jerusalem and are situated in Edom.

Usque ad Sarepta Eadem est haec vox cum illa, quae in 3 Reg. 17: de civitate iuxta Sidonem, in qua fuit vidua, quae pavit Heliam. Quod vero Lyranus nescio quas nugas hic profert et vult intelligi Franciam, mihi {p. 223} omnino non videtur convenire, violenta est et detorta glossa, quae ne speciem quidem veri habet. Similiter errant etiam in nostra translatione interpretes in vocabulo.

As far as Zarephath This manner of speaking is the same as that verse (which is in 1 Ki. 17) about the city [of Zarephath] near Sidon, in which there was a widow, who fed Elijah [1 Ki. 17:8-16]. Truly I do not know how Lyra advanced trifles and wanted it to be understood as France;[30] it seems to me to be altogether unfitting; it is a violent and distorted gloss, which really does not have the appearance of truth. Likewise, even the translators err in the name in our translation.

Bosphoro Hieronymus producit testimonium sui Iudaei, a quo linguam Hebraeam didicit, quod in Bosphorum Thraciae transtulerit Con[s]tantinus imperator Iudaeos atque in eo loco expectent rursum se instituturos regnum et nescio quae alia commenta, sed falsus est bonus vir Iudaico figmento. Nos omnino videmus loqui prophetam de illis

In Bosphorus[31] Jerome produces the testimony of his Jew, from whom he learned Hebrew, that the emperor Constantine transferred the Jews into Thracian Bosphorus, and there they in turn would expect themselves to be instituted to the kingdom (and I do not know what other fabrications) but that good man was mistaken by a Jewish fiction.[32]

---

[27] i.e. west of

[28] i.e. east of

[29] The Negeb

[30] Nicholas of Lyra in his comments on Obad. 20 in *Postilla super totam bibliam* brings up the interpretation of Rashi (i.e. Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki) (*ca.* 1040 – 1105) that Zarepheth is France. In his comments on the latter half of the verse (see the footnote below) he appears to adopt this conclusion as his own.

"*right up to Zarepheth*. In Hebrew it is: 'Right up to Sarphat.' that is, 'right up to France' as Rabbi Solomon says. And according to this he puts forth that it says this: 'and a captivity of this army,' that is, of the community of faithful existing in Judah who were members of the strong army against the Devil and the persecution of the unfaithful, some of whom were taken as captive through the various places of the unfaithful (who are called Canaanites [here]) and who yield all the way to France. Namely St. Savinianus, who was one of the 72 disciples [Luke 10:1f.] and converted the city of Sens to faith. At that time it was the main city in all of France and called the city of gold. After the city's conversion he dedicated it to the Lord, making crosses in the walls of the city with his thumb, to which the stone yielded just like soft wax; and up until now they appear in multiple locations just as I who wrote here have seen. And St. Savinianus's companions converted many other cities in France to the faith as is found in their Acts." (My translation.)

[31] i.e. Sepharad. See Jerome's comment below about this discrepancy.

[32] Jerome, *Commentarii in prophetas minores/Commentary on the Minor Prophets*

"Much here in our translation disagrees with the Vulgate: therefore, we ought to follow along in a historical exposition the true Hebrew. …Where we put 'to Bosphorus,' the Hebrew has 'Sapharad.' I do not know why the Septuagint wanted to translate it as "Ephratha" when both Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion are in agreement with the true Hebrew. However, we learned from a Hebrew who schooled us in the Holy Scriptures that it is called Bosphorus. And as a Jew, 'that place,' he says, 'is the area to which Hadrian transferred the captives.' Therefore, when our Christ returns, then even that captivity will return to Judea." (PL 25, coll. 1114-1115. My translation.)

Luther has replaced Hadrian with Constantine here. It may have been that he had Constantinople in mind when writing, which is in the area of Thracian Bosphorus, leading to this mistake.

locis, quae sunt in terra Chanaan, ubi regnum Christi primum per euangelium coepit. Caeterum in hebraeo est: Bisphorod i.e. ad Phorod, quae vox nusquam alibi habetur in bibliis. Ideo Iudaei etiam comminiscuntur quidvis nempe esse Hispaniam sed id omnino non convenit neque puto aliquem Iudaeorum scire quid sit. Et nostri interpretes falsi allusione nominis pro בִּסְפָרַד interpretali sunt bosphoro, id quod ridiculum est. Intelligendum est ergo ignobile aliquod oppidum in terra Chanaan, quod iniuria temporum obscuratum et, ut hodie non possimus scire, quid sit hoc loco. Nam Iudaica commenta frivola sunt at anilibus fabulis similia.

We entirely see that the prophet speaks about those places which are in the land of Canaan where the kingdom of Christ first began through the Gospel. This part in Hebrew is "Bishphorod" that is, "near Phorod", which manner of speaking is had nowhere else in the Bible. Therefore, the Jews again thought up whatever, namely that it is Spain,[33] but it altogether does not make sense, and I do not think that any Jew knows what it may be. And our translators, deceived by a play on names, have interpreted Bosphorus for בִּסְפָרַד, which is ridiculous. It must be understood then as some obscure town in the land of Canaan, which was covered by the injury of time, so that today we are not able to know what this place may be.[34] For the Jewish fictions are frivolous and also like old wives' tales.

21. *Et ascendent salvatores* Salvatores duces vocat, ut est in libro Iudicum, ubi multos misit eis salvatores hoc est duces, qui docerent eos et praecessent eis, praeirent, si quando dimicandum esset sum inimicis. Ita hic apostoli et alii discipuli salvatores vocantur nempe qui nuntiando euangelium laetum illud nuntium liberaverunt eos ab omnibus insultibus satanae et portarum infernarum et qui iudicaverunt eos in fide, dominati sunt eis in iustitia et iudicio sicque praeparaverunt domino regnum aeternum.

21. *And the saviors will ascend* He calls the leaders saviors, as is in Judges [3:9], where he sends many saviors to them, that is, leaders, who should teach them and restrain for them, and lead the way whenever they should have to fight their enemies. Thus here the apostles and other disciples are called saviors, namely those who, by announcing that joyful Gospel message, have freed them from all attacks of Satan and of the gates of Hell, and who have judged them in faith, and [who] are lords to them in righteousness and judgement and so have prepared the eternal kingdom for the Lord.

Christo Laus.

Praise to Christ.

[33] Lyra puts forth Rashi's interpretation that Bosphorus is Spain in his comments on Obad. 20 in *Postilla super totam bibliam*, which he seems to adopt as his own:

"*And the Jerusalem captives in Bosphorus.* In Hebrew it is: 'In Cepharad.' That is, 'in Spain' as Rabbi Solomon says, which was fulfilled through the Apostle James (cf. 1519[I], 34, n. 72) and his disciples preaching inner faith in Christ there and bringing the nations' necks under the yoke. Therefore, he adds: *They will possess the cities of the south.* For although Spain may be to the west when referencing Jerusalem, yet when referencing France, which mention had just immediately been made of, it is instead to the south." (My translation. See the footnote above.)

[34] We too are unsure of where this location may be. There are competing identifications with Sardis and a location in Libya (Pons, Mariona "The Origin of the Name Sepharad: A New Interpretation" *Journal of Semitic Studies* vol. 59, 297-313). Targum Jonathan is the first source we have that makes Biblical Sepharad the Iberian Peninsula.

Type in this volume:

Page Headings: Aldhabi 28

Body: EB Garamond 10